

Wildfire Smoke Information

Wildfire smoke can hurt your eyes, irritate your respiratory system and worsen certain chronic conditions. When smoke levels are high, even healthy people may experience symptoms.

Smoke can cause:

- coughing
- scratchy throat
- irritated sinuses
- shortness of breath
- chest pain or tightness
- headache
- stinging or burning eyes
- runny nose
- worsening of asthma

If you have pre-existing conditions such as respiratory allergies, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), the smoke may make your condition or symptoms worse.

To protect yourself and your family from the harmful effects of smoke:

- Avoid prolonged outdoor activities, especially if you can see smoke outside or you feel the effects of the smoke. It is important to limit the time children and people with pre-existing conditions spend outdoors.
- Stay indoors whenever possible. If possible, keep windows and doors closed. Use your air conditioner with a clean filter and the fresh air intake closed to prevent additional smoke from entering your home. If you don't have an air conditioner and it is too warm to stay inside with the windows closed, seek shelter elsewhere (friend/family member's home, public library, shopping centers).
- Do not add to indoor pollution. When smoke levels are high do not use anything that burns, such as candles, fireplaces or gas stoves. Do not vacuum, because vacuuming stirs up particles already inside your home. Do not smoke, because smoking puts even more pollution into your indoor air.

Air quality becomes a concern when the ground-level ozone is created with pollution and "cooked" by the heat and sun. It is known to injure the heart and lungs, in particular, and even is blamed for premature death. When the ozone is mixed with the high levels of tiny particles floating in the air – the dust, soot, ash, and smoke these particles can lodge in the lungs.

When visibility is under $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, due to smoke, the quality of air is hazardous. Visibility of 10 miles is considered good.

The public can help reduce ozone pollution by reducing driving and waiting to fuel vehicles, mow lawns and use high-solvent paints later in the day when it's cooler.